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HONOR TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS DEAD."

A L E C T U R E

IN BEHALF OF THE

Mount Vernon Association:

DELIVERED IN THE

STATE CAPITOL, NASHVILLE, WEDNESDAY, DEC. 4, 1857.

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A LECTURE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

Mount Vernon Association.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—In consenting to appear before you on this occasion, I might have selected, as the subject for a lecture, some department of Natural Science with which my later studies have made me more familiar, and which, therefore, I should have more hopes of rendering somewhat attractive. But the occasion seemed to demand a discourse of a different character;

and, trusting that the earnest desire to present forcibly the claims, purposes, and advantages of this Association might, to a certain extent, compensate for the imperfections in execution, I ask permission to select and to present, for your consideration this evening, as already announced, ideas bearing, I hope, upon the movement in question, under the title of

“HONOR TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS DEAD.”

In approaching this subject with strong feelings, earnestly enlisted, it may not be irrelevant to recall to your memory that when the venerable sage, Benjamin Franklin, died, a remark was aptly made by an orator of France, somewhat in these words: “One man is dead—two worlds mourn his loss.” Thus it is with all wise and good men. Although their countrymen rightfully claim them and glory in their more intimate relationship, the wise and good become, to some extent, whether authors, warriors, statesmen, or divines, public, cosmopolitan, and international property, shedding lustre on the whole human family, who welcome them to their great brotherhood.

It may not, therefore, be deemed unseemingly or unsuitable that others than native-born Americans should sound the praises of Columbia's honored sons; still less does it appear objectionable that one who for thirty years has uninterruptedly appreciated the excellence of that Constitution which resulted from the wisdom of those sages should bring his best energies to bear in recording the virtues of one of the wisest and best; and, if the language of advice is thought to be sometimes too urgent, let it be remembered that he who bequeaths sons to the country of his adoption retains in them the claims of an important life-interest; and is there-

fore entitled to be heard in aught affecting their welfare.

In calling your attention briefly to the duties which we owe to departed worth, I shall endeavor to point out:

Firstly, The peculiarities and advantages in our form of government, no law of which prevents the rise of the humblest native-born citizen to the highest dignities and emoluments.

Secondly, We shall examine the charge so frequently made against republics of being ungrateful to those who have rendered services to their country.

Thirdly, We shall see what steps our own country may reasonably take to avoid becoming liable to this charge.

And, lastly, we shall consider the most effective means of perpetuating the advantages secured to us by Washington and other heroes of the Revolution.

In accordance with this outline, I shall proceed, without further prefatory remarks, to examine *The Advantages of our Form of Government*.

These may appear so patent, so evident to all, at a glance, as to require no argument or appeal in their favor. But how often do we observe that those enjoying the greatest blessings are unconscious of them until deprived of those ad

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vantages! The sturdy yeoman, whose ruddy looks and whose unimpaired digestion enable him to enjoy the full exercise of his limbs, and the greatest amount of physical pleasure, pines for a city life, and knows not the advantages of which he partook, until stretched, pale-faced and diseased, on the bed of luxury, now to him a bed of thorns. The sportive infant longs for the excitement of mature manhood; the harassed business man wishes for his former imbecile infancy. The laboring man, forgetting the wearing anxieties which shatter the nerves, and the luxury which ruins the constitution of the millionaire, sighs for unbounded wealth, and groans at the possibility of want. The rich man, in his agony of spirit, regardless of the gaunt famine, the pinching cold, the temptation to crime, which stare the pauper in the face, views his own full coffers, and cries out, "All is vanity!"

Thus we, too, enjoying all the blessings of the most favored land, and the advantages of the freest government, are apt to forget these blessings and advantages, unless we occasionally pause to examine and to consider them.

No despot rides triumphant over *our* rights. No one-man power, not even an oligarchy, can here deprive us of our lives or our liberties, unless we violate some one of our wholesome laws or restraints, embodied in a code produced by legislators of our own selection. Here each citizen, when of age, has a vote, directly or indirectly, in the election of those framing and executing the laws; here the will of the majority governs; and it is our own faults, our own neglect of the necessary "eternal vigilance," if at any time we forfeit either our religious or our political freedom.

But paramount perhaps in its influence upon the character and actions of our people, cheering to the hearts of all Republicans, is the fact that each and every native-born citizen, no matter how poor his early circumstances, no difference how humble his origin, regardless of his antecedents, irrespective of heraldic honors,—provided he feels he has the honesty, the energy, the Heaven-sent attributes of virtue and of well-directed talents,—every citizen, I repeat, may aspire, although at first destitute of fortune, favor, or friends, to be the Washingtons, the Jeffersons, the Franklins, the Clays, the Websters, and similar characters, of which so many have adorned the pages of American history since the fire of Freedom was first kindled on Columbia's altars.

Here, then, is one of the greatest incentives to exertion, to public virtue, and to patriotism—to know that our labors will be appreciated by our fellow-citizens and our fellow-men. Not that indiscriminate ambition is to be encouraged; not that we would cherish a mere longing after distinction for the sake of notoriety, of wealth-bringing office, of evanescent popular shouts, of party plaudits, or of other unmeaning demonstrations; but the knowledge that the evidences of cool judgment with warm patriotism, that the unobtrusive pursuit of wisdom and virtue will finally be so appreciated by wise and good men as to demand that this wisdom and virtue be

brought to bear in the councils of the nation, be made to aid in maintaining the rich heritage bequeathed to us by our ancestral heroes of the Revolution, in its original purity and force; nay, yet more, the belief that such conduct and such labors will meet the approval of the Infinitely Supreme Judge, at the highest Heavenly Tribunal,—knowledge, I say, and thoughts such as these may well arouse the youth of America to exertion; ambition to be the most virtuous may justly be held up as legitimate, may confidently be placed before the aspiring eyes of youthful America, as the safest outlet, the true direction for zeal, for enthusiastic devotion, for that internal burning to attain high earthly distinction which already does, and probably ever will, characterize the American branch of the Anglo-Teutonic race.

Having thus briefly glanced at some of the advantages of our Republican Government, let us next inquire whether it can indeed be included among the Republics which have neglected to reward patriotic labors, and have thereby evinced ingratitude for services rendered.

When a despotic government, or even a monarchy, desires to show its approbation, and to induce a naval or a military hero, as commander of its forces, to brave death in its most terrific forms, or wishes to signify its appreciation of talents and energy displayed in the cabinet or legislative hall, the regal head, as king or emperor, confers upon his kneeling subject a title of nobility, a star to decorate the breast with some high order, a cross of the Legion of Honor, or some external mark of favor; and perhaps there is superadded a pension for life: all serving to secure to royalty the personal influence and support of the thus complimented personage. But, at the same time, a single inadvertent word may deprive him of all these honors, and even make his life the forfeit.

Not so in our Republic. No title of nobility pampers its recipient into self-sufficiency and his future successors into lazy aristocracy: few pensions are granted, except to wounded soldiers or sailors, or to their widows and children. Occasionally some quiet veteran *may* perhaps pass unnoticed; the labors of a useful discoverer in art or science *may* remain unrequited; but usually—heroism in the field, a judicious and consistent course of statesmanship, persevering efforts in useful mechanical or scientific discoveries, receive their reward, either in substantial moneyed returns, or in the approval of a large proportion of our best citizens. When, however, the benefits conferred by the labors of an individual have been so extended as to affect the whole nation, it becomes incumbent upon us to respond *nationally* to the call of honor to the individual; at least if we would avoid the reproach attached to some Republics, of ingratitude for national benefits and for services conferred by true patriots and statesmen.

This brings us to our third point of discussion: How can we best avoid resting under such an imputation? How can we most rationally and most effectively, as a great Republican Nation, signify our approval of the lasting benefits, the

endless advantages, bequeathed to us by the labors of such men as Washington?

Let us, in this connection, examine some of the most powerful feelings of our nature, and see in what manner they can be appropriately gratified.

The friendship existing between two of the same sex, having similar tastes and mutual confidence, has been occasionally celebrated in history; but such instances are rare: the love of David and Jonathan, the friendship of Damon and Pythias, may be cited as examples of this admirable trait.

Fraternal affection, in amiable and well-educated families, is perhaps more common; and history furnishes numerous interesting records of this virtue among distinguished men and women.

Every poet, from the earliest ages, has recorded instances of the more selfish, yet ever beautiful love existing between heart-betrothed individuals of opposite sexes; and the more civilized the nation, the more this virtue is elevated from mere physical attachment to the pure communion of genial spirits, laboring unitedly to render their children worthy members of an enlightened community. Of such domestic felicity, the sublime bard, Milton, receiving from his overflowing heart that inspiration which his sightless orbs denied him from the external works of nature, has the following beautiful lines, which, although familiar to all, may well bear repetition:

"Hail, wedded love, mysterious law, * *
* * * * * by thee
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure;
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother, first were known.
Far be't from me to write thee sin or blame,
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets."

Filial love, too, is so charming a sight, and its opposite so black a vice, that the conduct of children to parents has often been viewed as the best test of character, as the safest guide in our selection for the most sacred tie, the holy and chaste relationship of husband and wife. We may indeed rest assured that a bad daughter never made a good wife or mother.

But the most powerful of all human affections is parental love. That glorious northern minstrel of old Scotia's rough but virtuous people, Walter Scott, in preserving the traditional records of their pure and simple lives, thus depicts the love of Douglas for his daughter in the well-known lines:

"Some feelings are to mortals given,
With less of earth in them than heaven;
And if there be a human tear
From passion's dross refined and clear,—
A tear so limpid and so meek,
It would not stain an angel's cheek,—
'Tis that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter's head."

If such is often the strength of a father's love for his offspring, what shall we say of a mother's love? How shall we find words to express the strongest of all earthly emotions—a mother's devotion to the child of her bosom, one who bears the lineaments of the chosen of her heart,

the husband of her affections, the father of her first-born! For her *child* the mother will risk wearing labor, grim famine, conjugal desertion, the world's jeers, death itself, even in its most appalling form, without a flinch, without a murmur.

Any honor, then, offered to a friend or relative must be gratifying to a feeling heart; but above all must it be so to any one of us, if the individual so honored bear to us the relationship of parent or of child.

Scarcely less powerful, and even less selfish, is the love some bear to their native country. Who that has a throb of human feeling in his heart can see or hear of the sufferings of his country, of his countrymen being conquered, but must feel his blood boil with indignation? Who can read of the numerous instances, recorded in Grecian, Roman, Scottish, Swiss, and other histories, of patriotic devotion, without having his soul stirred within him? Can the most insensible recall the memories of his childhood's home, bleak, dreary, barren, and mountainous though it may have been, without emotion? How then must the more sensitive heart respond to those well-known, but ever beautiful lines of Walter Scott:

"Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land?"

The hardy Swiss, the rocky peaks of whose country afford but a scanty soil for her increasing population, frequently seeks amid strangers a more ready return for his labors. His hardihood and native bravery often induce him to enter foreign armies: hence the charge of mercenary conduct brought against them, but without foundation, embodied in the sentiment, "Point d'argent, point de Suisse." The great Louis the XIV. knew, however, their love of country so well, and valued their services so highly, that he forbade his bands ever to play one of their national "Ranz des Vaches." Let a Swiss but hear one of those touching melodies, especially with the original words of one of their most favorite ballads, beginning, "Herz, mein Herz, warum so traurig," since rendered into the well-known English verses, thus:

"Why, oh, why, my heart, this sadness?
Why mid scenes like these decline?
What though all's strange; 'tis joy and gladness;
Oh! say, what wish can yet be thine?
All that's dear to me is wanting;
Lone and cheerless here I roam;
The stranger's joy, how'er enchanting,
To me can never be like home.
Oh, give me those—I ask no other—
Those that bless the humble dome
Where dwell my father and my mother;
Oh! give me back my native home!"

Let the Swiss, I repeat, but hear these words, with their plaintive air, when in a foreign land, or attached to a foreign army, and very frequently he either deserts at the risk of his life, or, if his moral power overcomes the temptation, he droops and dies, without any physical cause, simply from a resistless yearning for the home of his childhood.

If the Swede, the Swiss, the Scot, after tear-

ing himself for a long lifetime from his birth-place, for the sake of religious and political liberty, when thinking on his snow-clad hills and mountain peaks, his scanty soil, his sometimes oppressed countrymen, still yearn to look upon them and to bless them yet once again before he dies, what should, what must Americans feel when they proudly look around upon *their* favored soil? Truly their thoughts should often rise in gratitude to the bounteous Giver of all good; and earnest prayers should ascend to the throne of Jehovah, that no blot may ever stain America's honored escutcheon; that her sons and daughters may ever remain worthy of the countless blessings He has graciously shed around them; that industry, temperance, justice, truth, knowledge, freedom, and true religion may find in them earnest admirers, practical exponents, unwavering defenders.

Such, then, being the powerful emotions, even unto death, called forth by intense love, either for an idolized friend or for our cherished native soil, *these* would seem to be the feelings to which we may most powerfully appeal, and which we may most appropriately gratify, while endeavoring to render justice to the "Distinguished Living" or "Honor to the Illustrious Dead."

To apply all this to the particular case in question, let us now finally examine, somewhat in detail, how we can most suitably honor the memory of George Washington. He has no immediate descendants on whom his country can bestow honors, but he has relatives to whom it must be highly gratifying to see his country's devotion to his memory.

He himself, it is well known, revered his mother, and ascribed to her the development of the best traits in his character. His wife, too, was cherished by him with exemplary evidences of high esteem and of conjugal tenderness.

With such facts before us, we cannot doubt that if he is permitted, prior to the great and final judgment of mortals before the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, to see and know the acts of his beloved country, his soul would exult to learn that the women of America had been among the first to render honor to his memory: to know that *that* sex which his cherished mother had aided by her goodness to elevate; *that* sex of which his beloved wife had been a peerless ornament; *that* sex which elevates intellectuality to morality—without which the highest genius may sink to the lowest depths of degradation—that *that* sex was the first to rear a monument to his virtues. Nor can we doubt that his spirit would rejoice to see American womanhood here again foremost in the ranks, striving to secure his beloved home, to snatch from ruin and decay his earthly resting-place, his never-forgotten Mount Vernon.

Nay, more: he would doubtless find an additional source of gratification in the fact that at least *one* who is taking a lead in this praiseworthy enterprise is a granddaughter of a signer of the Declaration of Independence, a lineal descendant of one of Washington's beloved companions, of one of those heroes who aided to secure the inestimable privileges we sometimes so thoughtlessly enjoy.

Grateful, then, as it could not fail to be to him to know how his memory is cherished in the hearts of his countrymen generally, it must be doubly sweet to feel that those whose parents knew him best, love and revere him most.

But we cannot leave it to those who more immediately enjoyed his intimacy, to carry out this attractive design of securing to his countrymen, ere too late, those hallowed spots in the glorious old State of Virginia, of which it may truly be said, somewhat in the language on an old tombstone, that she gave birth to as much human greatness as could live, and still shelters the mortal remains of "as much virtue as could die."

That greatness and that virtue are known wherever our language and the labors of our missionaries have penetrated—and where have they not?—and the name of George Washington, the Father of his Country, is better known than that of the proudest potentate of antiquity, and infinitely more beloved than that of any Czar, whose sceptre carries implicit obedience over an empire on which England's proud boast is almost verified, that "on her dominions the sun never sets."

Russia, extending from Western Europe over Asia and through some north-western portions of this continent, presents a surface, some portion or other of which almost always receives the vivifying rays of the orient-worshipped orb, that glorious source of light and heat, which, called into existence by the Almighty fiat, brought forth a lovely paradise from the blackness of an impenetrable chaos, causing life and motion to spring from death-like elements. Yet Russia, with this her gigantic empire, more than double the size of Europe, with her boundless wealth, and with her Peter the Great, could only present to the gaze of the world an astounding intellect, a being of irresistible will and of indomitable energy, tarnished by some of the worst passions of humanity.

From the horizon of that great and enlightened country, France, too, there shot through the civilized world an intellectual meteor, which dazzled the vision of all ordinary beholders. But when the glare passed away, although all acknowledged the transcendent talents of Napoleon the First, many blushed for his errors and his selfishness.

Greece may justly glory in her Homer, her Demosthenes, her Epaminondas, her Plato, her Solon, her Socrates, and similar great men; Ancient Rome in her Cæsars, her Virgils, her Senecas; Modern Italy in her Galileo, her Tasso, her Dante, her Raphael; Sweden may vaunt her Charles the XII., and honor her Linnaeus and her Berzelius, as Denmark her Tycho Brahe. Germany may well be proud of her Charlemagne, her Charles the Fifth, her Kepler, her Leibnitz, her Schiller, her Göthe, her Mozart; and, although still living, may I not also add, her Humboldt. Asia claims a prominent place for her Genghis Khan and her Tamerlane; Egypt for her Saladin. Spain can boast of a Cervantes, a Lopez de Vega, and of an adopted Columbus. Switzerland has a just right to be proud of a Tell, a Winkelried; Scotland of a Wallace, a

Scott, a Burns; Ireland of an Emmet, a Wellington, a Swift; England of her Nelson, Chatham, Shakspeare, Milton, Newton, Locke, and a host of others. But it was reserved for Anglo-Saxon stock, derived from the British Isle, and Americanized during several generations in this our favored land, to present to the world, at a highly critical period, the most perfect combination of physical, intellectual, and moral excellence of which history has preserved any record. In George Washington were united the fiery genius and unflinching bravery of the soldier, the cool judgment and acute discernment of the statesman, the calm dignity and unswerving virtue of the true Christian.

What potentate can boast of more gratifying homage from more loving hearts than that which, I am informed, is daily paid to the memory of the Father of his Country? Each and every steamboat plying on the blue waters of the broad Potomac, as the steamer arrives in sight of Mount Vernon, tolls her bell, and the whole of the passengers, from the gray-haired sire to the lisping child, assemble on deck; then, in passing near the honored grave of Washington, all heads are uncovered in spontaneous tribute of undying respect and of heartfelt love.

Let, then, the East point to the Mausolean pyramids of forgotten kings; let Russia hew, from the solid granite, statues of her Peter, and Britain dot the streets of London with bronze and marble figures of Wellington; let the Arab make his pilgrimage to Mecca, the Italians visit the resting-place of their Mantuan bard, and the French weep, for their former neglect, over the ashes now gathered from St. Helena's Isle; but let Americans continue, as they now do, to render their silent homage at the tomb of the great and the good man.

Only a few weeks since, there passed from this earth one who cherished the memory of Washington, and spared not his private fortune in keeping up the patrimonial reminiscences of his beloved relative. But George Washington Parke Custis, the lineal descendant, by a former marriage, of Washington's wife, is no more; the present proprietor is, it is said, not wealthy; and in a few years the cherished spot may even have to pass into the hands of strangers, if it be not made state or national property.

It needs not this purchase, or any monumental erection, to have Washington live in the memories of his countrymen; yet evidences such as these are wanting to form rallying-points for strangers who visit our country; also as gratifying spots of reunion for ourselves; and, finally, as proof to monarchical and despotic powers that *our* Republic, at least, is not ungrateful; that she is willing to dispose of a portion of her wealth in rearing these external signs of distinction. It is pleasing to see, in England, many a citizen of which could himself raise a splendid and costly monument to perpetuate the recollection of services rendered by such a statesman as Peel—who, like numbers of our own, elevated himself from the ranks of the laboring community—it is pleasing, I say, to see that there, instead of resorting to the plan of subscription from one or from a few wealthy, they restricted

it to two cents, so that each and every citizen may feel he has an ownership in the testimonial. So let it be with us. The Washington Monument is yet unfinished. A friend suggests that at some general election such arrangements should be made as to receive funds for this purpose, restricting the subscription to one time. This, from our three and a half million voters, (and who but would gladly give this poor pittance in such a cause?) would raise \$350,000, a sum sufficient to complete the work in creditable style.

But it is more especially the object at present to call your attention to securing Mount Vernon by voluntary subscriptions, which have already reached, I am informed, nearly the sum of \$100,000, (greatly through the efforts of America's splendid orator, Edward Everett,) and yet require about \$100,000 more to make up the purchase-money. That this sum will soon be raised among the warm-hearted sons and daughters of this Union, we cannot for a moment doubt; and that Tennessee will, as ever, be found among the most ready to do her duty, is equally certain. It is to prevent the resting-place of the Father of our Country from mouldering to ruin, or his relatives from being unduly taxed to keep it up. Is it to save from the axe the noble forest trees—every leaf of which might furnish material for a volume in the life of Washington—which have, at intervals, to be sold in order to keep up repairs, and to meet other expenditures on the property; it is for objects such as these that this Association desires funds.

When imagining, some time since, the spirit of Washington taking cognizance of our acts, we supposed it would be gratifying to him to see evidences such as will be exhibited when this proposed good work shall be completed, as a testimonial of the remembrance in which he is held by his countrymen. But if we may judge by all we know regarding him, the tribute to his memory which he would undoubtedly prize the most highly, would be to see unmistakable evidence that his labors to secure independence of speech and action to his country were rewarded by a continuance of such liberty, and that the Constitution which his wisdom had aided to frame was preserved in its spirit and its letter; that the Confederation which he was instrumental in consolidating remained intact, and continues, in harmonious action, to extend the empire of true liberty, unbroken by party faction, untainted by office-seeking avidity; and further, to learn that his name is held up successfully, before the eyes of the rising generation, as the brightest example which can be selected from the annals of biography.

We cannot doubt that his spirit would rejoice to see the institutions of his country maintained in purity; to see that there was at least as much emulous solicitude and attention devoted to the fostering of education, in its full physical, intellectual, and moral bearing, throughout the land, as there is care and anxiety for the accumulation of wealth, and for its ruinous, outlying display, in the external trappings of glittering tinsel: to feel assured that Americans are not degenerating in any respect: to learn that the

women of America are not deteriorating God's image by neglecting the laws necessary to make them the healthy and happy mothers of sound and virtuous children: to know that peace, harmony, and unity of ultimate purpose prevail among the descendants of those who entered into this original political compact; and that, when diversity of opinion, as to the means in detail, cannot be reconciled, mutual forbearance will be exercised, and that the spirit of true Christian charity will prevail.

Regarding the great and broad principles of republicanism, there can, in this country, be no diversity of opinion. On these then let us unite: let us accord to each and every citizen the greatest amount of civil and religious liberty compatible with an equal amount in his fellow-citizen. If the views of our fellow-men, on any important subjects, differ from our own, let us, in accordance with what we deem a duty, employ every argument suggested by our understanding to convince, the warmest words of eloquence prompted by our heart to persuade. But when we have effected all we can in this manner and by our individual vote, then let us quietly acquiesce in the decision of the majority; let us beware of harsh accusations; let us avoid abuse and violence, lest we commit the very same injustice from which our pilgrim-forefathers sought to escape by leaving their luxurious European homes to dwell in the solitude and freedom of America's then almost impenetrable forests, in the independence of her rich but, at that time, deadly-malarious valleys. In one brief sentence, which embodies all, *Let us act constantly from deliberate judgment, not from impulsive feelings.*

And if, as already stated, there are great and agitating questions, regarding which we cannot take the same views, let us give each other credit for good intentions, and listen—if possible, dispassionately—to all arguments adduced on either side, provided those arguments are advanced in the gentlemanly language of courtesy, in the true spirit of Christian forbearance.

Liberty of speech may certainly become libelous; liberty of the press, that inestimable triumph of knowledge and civilization, may undoubtedly degenerate into licentiousness; but let it never be said of us that we fear the light of scrutiny to be thrown on our social, political, or religious conduct; let it never be said of Republican America that she is unwilling to suffer any subject to be discussed, in her legislative bodies, or in her numerous and able journals, provided the speakers and writers, in the use of arguments and selection of language, bear ever in mind the Divine maxim, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them likewise."

To aid in teaching these great lessons, to impress these moral truths on the rising youth, let every American make a pilgrimage to the Tomb of Washington, to the shrine of virtue. Not for man-worship; nor yet, like Hamilear, to make a Hannibal swear eternal vengeance at the altar. On the contrary, let it be in order that all parents may, on such a spot, surrounded by such impressive adjuncts, consecrate their sons and daughters to virtue, dedicate their lives to a struggle for self-victory. There let every father

or mother point out the difference between true and false liberty. Let children be admonished that true independence does not consist in being absolved, before the years of discretion arrive, from wholesome parental restraints, from friendly counsel; that true liberty is far removed from precocious licentiousness; that the greatest conquest is the conquest of ourselves, when passions prompt us against our reason; that true liberty consists in our exercising, after sufficient age has matured our judgment, such form of religion as our conscience deems most acceptable to our Maker, and in resisting, even unto death, any one-man power, which attempts to control opinions or actions not hurtful to our neighbor, not infringing on his equal liberty of speech or action.

Let the parent hold up the bright example of Washington as the model, and implore the child, as it values its temporal and eternal happiness, to emulate his greatness, to imitate his virtues, his temperance in all things, and to avoid, as it would a moral pestilence, the excitement of the poisoned cup, that enslaving and soul-corrupting bringer of intemperance; and to shun, as it would the pollution of leprosy, lewd and immoral companionship, the inevitable destroyer of body, mind, and morals.

Let the anxious parent thus arouse, in the hearts of the beloved offspring, an earnest, firm, and lasting determination to imitate, in their lives, Washington's unwavering truth, his absence of selfishness or party-spirit, his cool bravery, his sound judgment, his self-denying patriotism—that combined galaxy of virtues, adorning the path to immortality, and shedding effulgence over the world; effulgence which reflects, as far as mortal power can, the pure and bright emanations from Omnipresence, never seen but ever felt—from Omnipotence, immutable, immaculate, and eternal.

Would we crave for our beloved country the blessings of such a Creator; would we beseech the aid of a Godhead, himself the essence of love; must we not first quell all angry passions, all dissensions, jealousy, and hatred, and ourselves carry out, in good faith, the sublime precept and example of "Peace on earth and good will towards all men?"

But, if such be really our desire, we should carefully remember the importance of watchfully guarding against incipient evil. Let us draw a lesson from other portions of the physical world. Would the delicate human constitution avert fell disease, the remedy must be applied when the first appearances show themselves: no neglected symptoms must be permitted to proceed, indicating an inflamed state, and, lastly, a destruction of organs designed to inhale the vital air of heaven, and to purify the warm blood that gives vigor and thought to the brain. Would the suffering patient avoid pain and anguish from a bruised limb, it is too late to repent of negligence, or to recoil, when the sharp knife of the skilled surgeon gleams over the operator's table, ready to sever the gangrened portion, as the last chance of saving vitality to the rest. Would we arrest the spark about to consume our countless possessions, and perhaps to destroy many human

lives, we must take it at the beginning, when the breath of a child could extinguish it, not when the raging element has been fanned into fury, during the unnoticed hours of night, and now sends to the starry vault a lurid glare, that strives to emulate heaven's radiant luminary, but only renders the surrounding darkness yet deeper. Would we save from shipwreck the sinking vessel, we must, if possible, stop the first leak, before the mighty rush of waters threatens to sink the gallant craft; a vessel built perhaps of the soundest live-oak, framed by the best of workmen, rigged with consummate skill, manned with a dauntless crew. A few pounds of oakum may suffice, as yet, to save a thousand lives; but let the leak progress, let the hold fill, let the pumps get choked, neglect the first precious moments, and soon one wild and death-knell shriek will rise above the din of storm, the crash of breaking spars and masts, the thunder's roar following the electric flash. Too late ascend to an offended Deity the prayers of those who knew not or obeyed not His immutable laws. A thousand souls are sent, in one brief second, prepared or unprepared, before the judgment-seat of God!

Thus is it, too, with the body politic; thus is it with the great ship of state. The first injury, the incipient spark, the small leak, all typify the discord which arises occasionally among the best. Let us quell it at the start. Let us go home this night, and not only then, but every night hereafter, before consigning our souls to the safe-keeping of the Eternal Power that watches over us, whether sleeping or waking; let us invoke His blessing on our yet happy country. Let us entreat him to soften our hearts and to enlighten our intellects, so that we may not misunderstand the words and actions of our brother; let us beseech Him that we and our children may, like the Father of our Country, who "knew no North, no South, no East, no West," when the welfare of his country was at stake, be governed by our best judgment, and not be led astray by our angry passions; let us implore Divine Providence to crush the seeds of discord, and so to wither them in the germ that they will never grow or increase; let us from the depths of sincere and contrite souls pray to Him for a tithe of that ineffable love which is the emblem of His own Supreme Excellence. Then, perhaps, throughout the length and breadth of

this glorious country, He may vouchsafe to diffuse peace, and knowledge, and liberty, so that all our brightest hopes, all the fond anticipations of philanthropists throughout the world, may *not* be crushed for ever by distrust, discord, dissension, fierce war, in which not only man hunts down his fellow-man, as though he pursued a savage beast, but necessarily, in such a case, fierce *civil* war, in which the horrors of Delhi would be surpassed; for here the curse of Cain would be realized—brother butchering brother, the bullet of the father reaching the heart perhaps of his only son.

Oh! let not the Searcher of Hearts have cause to cry out to us: "Cain, where is thy brother?" Let him not look down upon this his fair land discordant, dishonored, ruined, and finally blotted from among His works, from out the history of nations, by the mingled heart's-blood of brothers murdered by each other's hands!

Sooner, far sooner let the earth yawn and engulf us; sooner let a consuming meteor, a sun of fire, in its erratic course, parch our share of this earth to a blackened cinder; far sooner may the floodgates of heaven again be opened, and an o'erwhelming deluge bury our portion of North America, while she is yet "The Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave," beneath the deep waters of the commingling Atlantic and Pacific, never to rise again! Swept, while yet innocent, for ever from existence, she will leave at least no record of domestic strife, of national gangrene, of fratricides and parricides: the boundless ocean-archives will alone remain token of her utter annihilation.

Forbid it, Heaven! Forbid it that the calamities we have depicted should ever visit this thrice-glorious country! Omniscient God, in Thy eternal wisdom, avert the threatened scourge! Our prayers, if sincere, will be heard. God, in His infinite mercy, will fill our hearts with a touch of His attributes,—Justice, Truth, and Love. His favored land will be saved—saved through Him, by the intelligence and virtue of its people.

Then, instead of discord and bloodshed, instead of party-strife and murder, the struggle will be, who shall acquire the most wisdom, who lead the most virtuous life, who best promote virtue, by rewarding the "Distinguished Living;" who most honor virtue, by rendering "Honor to the Illustrious Dead."





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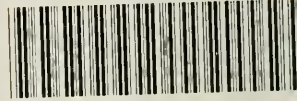


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